

A NEW TRAINING SCHOOL FOR NURSES

BY SARAH B. TYSON

EVERY year we are becoming more dependent upon nurses trained to take care of the sick. The question which is being agitated all over this country is: How shall we train our nurses? Shall they be given a course of two years or three years? Shall they be required to have state registration? Shall they be paid for their services, or be asked, in return for the training which they receive, a tuition fee from the school?

The fashion of becoming a trained nurse is a thing of the past, and the young women who are going into nursing in the present day do so for one, sometimes for two, reasons, either of necessity or because they feel they want an occupation. There are still a few women, I am happy to say, who take up nursing because they feel that they can do more good in the world in this than in any other way. They feel, as did Florence Nightingale, that "it is one of the Fine Arts. I had almost said, the finest of the Fine Arts."

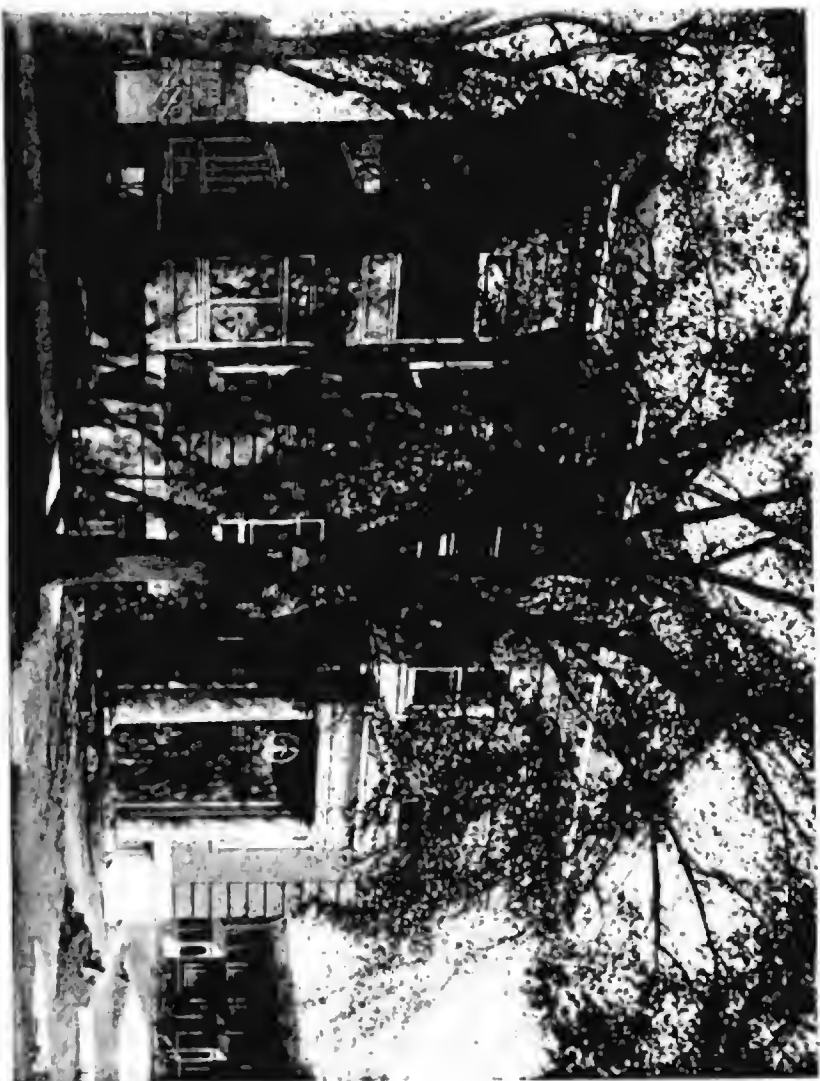
We wish we could persuade some of the thousands of girls who are taking up the study of art and music, and who never will accomplish anything worth the while in that line, that nursing is an art, and that with the same amount of time spent in preparation, they can fit themselves for a life of usefulness—a life where their earnest endeavor will count much more than if they devote themselves to art or music.

Then, too, the commercial pursuits take many of our young girls, as stenographers, typewriters, bookkeepers, clerks, librarians, telephone operators, etc. In these days many more occupations are open to women than formerly.

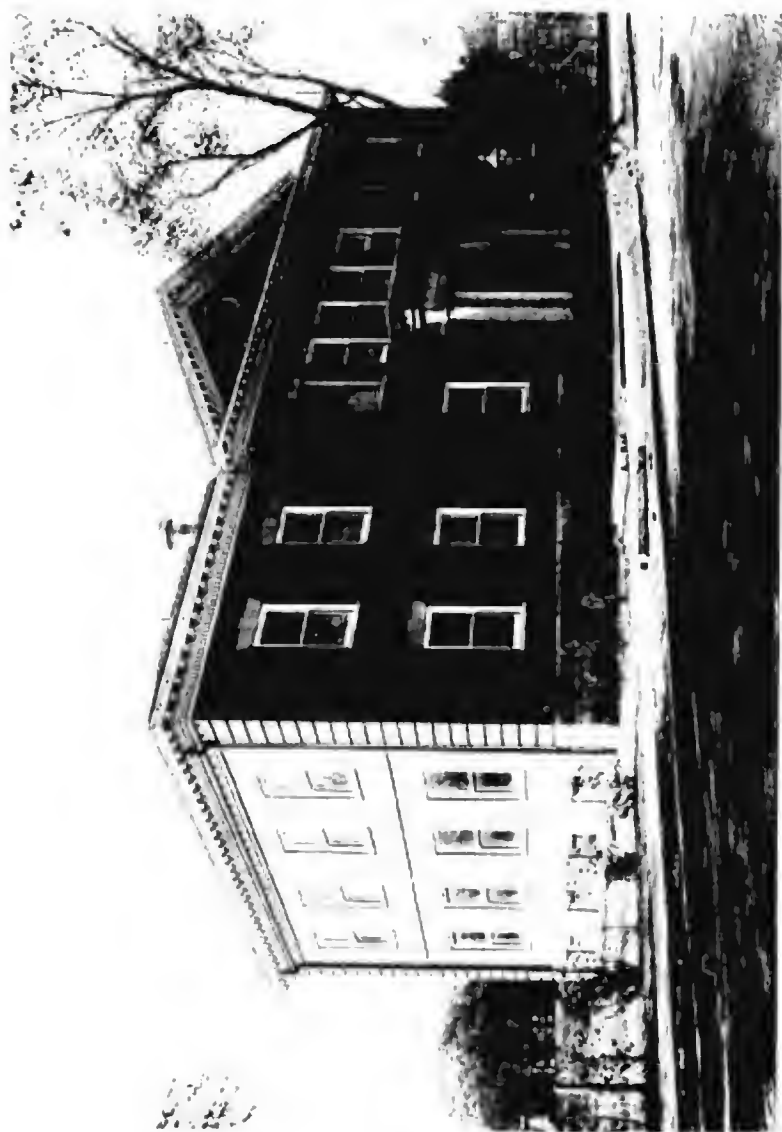
In taking up the profession of nursing, there have been several drawbacks, many of which, I think, can be overcome. First and foremost, there has not been sufficient pains taken in our hospitals for the comfort and well-being of our nurses. The hours are too long, the distances which a nurse has to travel over too great, there is not enough recreation and pleasure planned for the nurses, their food is apt to be poor, and their quarters far from comfortable.

In starting the new training school of the Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago, we are trying to improve the conditions for the nurses. The first step, and perhaps the most important, is to separate, to a certain extent, the theoretical work from the practical.

After a nurse has had two months of probation in the hospital, she



CRIBSIDE OR BABIES' PAVILION



MAURICE PORTER MEMORIAL. FRONT VIEW

will have four months of academic work. Except for a little light house-work in the nurses' home, she will have seven hours each day for recitation and study. There will be four hours of class work, in the morning from 10 to 12 and in the afternoon from 1 to 3, and classes in anatomy, bacteriology, chemistry, hygiene, medical ethics, physiology, solutions, and domestic science classes in cooking and food values, cleaning, sewing and the printing of hospital records.

The nurse will not have the distractions of ward duty during the academic course, but she will live in the nurses' home, have no expense for board and laundry, and will be paid five dollars a month to cover the expense of text-books, car fare, etc.

The next step in advance, as far as our particular hospital is concerned, is one relative to children. Nurses heretofore, in this part of the country, have only had a few months' training in children's diseases in the general hospitals. In the course which we plan, they will have eighteen months with babies and children, an especial course in the milk laboratory, and in visiting nurse work under the Visiting Nurse Association.

For several years past, when a baby or child has been dismissed from the hospital as convalescent, but where special attention is necessary as to diet or care, our visiting nurse has been sent, perhaps daily at first, then at longer intervals, to make sure that the doctor's instructions are carried out. As a result, 50 per cent. of the children do not return for further treatment as they formerly did.

If an especially unsanitary home is found, or conditions which should not prevail, the case is reported to the Board of Health. We have begun to work along these lines with our small hospital, which has a capacity of thirty-five beds. How much better work we can do when the new pavilions are opened! and within a few weeks our patients can be classified in the surgical, medical and babies' pavilions, where in all we will have a capacity of one hundred and five beds. In the new medical and babies' pavilions, the fine sun porches to the south are one of the special features. With the older children, the boys will be kept on one floor, the girls on the other. Each floor has its large sun porch, its diet kitchen, linen room, dining-room for the convalescent children, and nurses' supply room with its medicine closet, utensil sterilizer and blanket warmer.

In the centre of the property, consisting of four acres of land, there will be a park or playground for the convalescent children.

The nurse will be kept on duty for four months at a time in each pavilion, and the class work, after the preliminary academic course, will be arranged accordingly for the pupil nurses. *Materia medica*, surgical

classes, bandaging, massage, plaster work, diseases of the eye, ear and throat, infectious diseases, skin diseases, emergencies, nervous diseases, care of convalescents and kindergarten classes will all be taken up in their turn.

In the year of adult work at the Presbyterian Hospital, nurses will have practice in private work which they will not get at present in the Children's Hospital, and will also have maternity work, filling out the general training which our nurses should have if they desire to be able to acquire state registration.

What has the agitation in the country accomplished in regard to state registration? Personally, I feel the most important step which has been gained by it is to put more of the graduates of the different schools and states on an equal footing.

It is not right that a woman graduating from a hospital of from twelve to twenty patients, where she has spent perhaps a year or two years, should have an equal standard and salary with that of a woman who has graduated from a hospital with a capacity of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty beds, where her class work has been much more assiduous, and where she has spent at least three years. We should all do what we can to make nursing one of the noblest of women's professions. Our nurses should be treated like human beings, not like machines. Our discipline need not be lax, but there should be a spirit of helpfulness and cheerfulness, they should not feel that it is three years of drudgery and overwork. Why should there not be the same atmosphere in the nurses' home that there is in many of our girls' boarding schools and why should our nurses not look back on the years spent in training as three of the most profitable, and pleasant of their lives?

Much depends on the spirit in which a girl takes up her training, and much, too, depends upon the spirit of her principal and superior nurse. Let me repeat, that nursing should be a vocation, not an avocation. A girl should nurse because she loves it and not because she feels she must do something to earn her livelihood.

If, under these conditions, we can carry on our school, it will be successful, and as we now have gone to the eastern cities, Philadelphia, New York and Boston, for the principal of our training school and for head nurses trained especially for children, in turn from our school will emanate many fine women who will scatter over our country as superintendents, principals of training schools and head nurses for other hospitals, and private nurses for many homes.



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